

Pittman of Mobile, Alabama, for his courageous service during World War II. His heroic story, along with other Mobilians, is told in Ken Burns' documentary series "The War."

Mr. Pittman was working in Mobile for his father's carpentry business when he enlisted in the Marines. Trained to be a member of a demolition team that assaults enemy "strong points" in advance of the rifleman, he was assigned to the 4th Marine Division, 20th Marine Engineers.

In February of 1944, he and his division were fighting in the Marshall Islands before landing on Saipan. After securing the island, they invaded Tinian. Pittman lost 50 pounds in the five months he spent on these two islands. By February of 1945, he was promoted to sergeant and put in charge of his own demolition team. On February 19, 1945, Sgt. Pittman and his squad landed on Iwo Jima. The squad of 16 was left with only three men by the end of the battle.

Mr. Pittman's daughter, Beth Harrison, put it best in her article for the Hattiesburg American, "Dad has always said he has lived 62 years more than he should have and has often wondered and marveled at why his life was spared. Now, at age 84, Ken Burns will tell his story."

Madam Speaker, the recognition of Mr. Ray Pittman in "The War" documentary is an appropriate time for us to pause and thank him—and all of the soldiers who fought in World War II. They personify the very best America has to offer. I urge my colleagues to take a moment to pay tribute to Mr. Pittman and his selfless devotion to our country and the freedom we enjoy.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES VANIK

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay respect and tribute to former Rep. Charles Vanik of Ohio, who died Wednesday August 31 at his home in Jupiter, Florida at age 94.

Looking back at the career and mission of Representative Vanik, it is an utterly refreshing example of a legislator who didn't let politics get in the way of his goals and vision for his constituents and people all over the world. Many of my colleagues have already mentioned the historic Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1974. This critical human rights legislation was the mark on the map for Charles Vanik with regards to those outside the state of Ohio, but for us Ohioans, we know Congressman Vanik as a lifelong stalwart for all of those who are socially and economically oppressed.

Charles Vanik led a life of complete selflessness. After receiving his law degree he was on the City Council and in the Ohio legislature where he was valued for his consistent effort and achievements. He then joined the Navy during World War II. After his time in the service, Charles Vanik became a municipal judge until 1954 when he first ran for Congress. As a member of the Ways and Means Committee with jurisdiction over tax law, Congressman Vanik was known for his fights against big

business tax breaks in the halls and corridors of Congress as he was known for his signature bow ties.

Congressman Vanik served honorably and long as a dedicated public servant. Mr. Vanik, who had rarely spent little more than \$3,000 for any of his re-election bids, became increasingly discouraged with the changing political world and the need to siphon time and resources away from addressing the concerns of his constituents. He chose not to run for re-election in 1980.

Charles Vanik's life and his commitment to principle are truly remarkable. I believe one of the most important things we should learn from the actions and words of Charles Vanik is to constantly hold ourselves to the highest possible standards, no matter what the political environment or what criticism you might face. The United States Congress and the state of Ohio will miss one of its greatest public officials, Congressman Charles Vanik.

HONORING BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Bergen County Academies, whose outstanding work has been rewarded with the Intel Schools of Distinction Award which commends their superior math and science programs.

The Intel Schools of Distinction Award recognizes kindergarten through twelfth grade schools that promote 21st Century learning skills in math and science. One elementary, one middle, and one high school in each of two categories—math and science—will receive a \$10,000 cash grant and \$150,000 in products and services from the award's sponsors. In order to be considered as an Intel School of Distinction, schools must develop an environment and curricula that meet or exceed benchmarks, including national mathematics and science content standards. Bergen County Academies was one of only six schools selected to receive this honorable distinction nationwide.

The classes at Bergen County Academies—from the pre-kindergarten class to the twelfth grade—have demonstrated excellence in implementing innovative programs that support positive student achievement in math and science, effectively use technology, and leverage the benefits of teamwork in the development of superior classroom teachers. Winning schools serve as models for educators across the country.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me today in commending Principal Daniel Jaye, the staff, and students of Bergen County Academies for their outstanding commitment to excellence in math and science. They are a great credit to our community and entire country.

IN HONOR OF BRIAN SIMPSON,
WES WILLIAMS, AND JOE JANSEN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and thank three of my constituents who helped save the life of their friend Todd Endris, after he was attacked by a Great White shark off Marina State Beach in California on August 28. Though shark attacks actually are less common than the media would have you believe they are nonetheless startling and scary whenever they do happen. We are reminded only too graphically of the power of nature when these beasts of the ocean appear.

Endris, a 24-year-old student at California State University at Monterey Bay, was surfing in Marina when a 15-foot Great White caught him on his right side and dragged him under the waves. Todd fought with the shark, striking it again and again on the eye with his fist. After what seemed like endless punches the shark released Todd who scrambled desperately back to the water's surface exhausted and bleeding. His friend Joe Jansen who had seen the attack unfold shouted to Endris to grab hold of and climb back on his surfboard as best he could while friends and fellow surfers Brian Simpson and Wes Williams helped steer him back to the beach. Todd lost nearly three liters of blood and was close to shock. Without the intervention of the other three swimmers, he could have slipped away and back into danger's path. As it was, he suffered extensive injuries to his torso and right hip and leg. He was flown to Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose and is now expected to make a full recovery.

Madam Speaker, August 28 started out like any other day for these young men, who were simply out for a day of surfing. No one expected to be called "hero" before the day was done. But that is exactly what I would call Joe Jansen, Brian Simpson and Wes Williams for their courage in saving their friend Todd Endris from a fatal shark attack. I thank them for their selfless bravery and wish Todd good luck in his recovery.

TRIBUTE TO FIRE CHIEF MICHAEL VARNEY

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contribution of Fire Chief Michael Varney to the citizens of Ellington, Connecticut and the strength of our volunteer corps of first responders. Michael was recently selected by Fire Chief Magazine as the 2007 Volunteer Chief of the Year, a great honor in the field and a testament to the commitment and selfless public service of this citizen hero. The award is made all the more special given that the nomination and selection comes from his peers from across the nation amongst an enviable group of worthy candidates. Our nation owes a great debt to these first responders who voluntarily put their life on